

Minneapolis, MN - For the more than 5 million people nationwide living with Alzheimer's, and the 97,760 living right here in Minnesota, the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota commends Representative McCollum for sponsoring the "National Alzheimer's Project Act," (S. 3036/H.R. 4689). In supporting this legislation, Representative McCollum signals her understanding of the fundamental need for a coordinated federal approach to confront one of America's most feared and costly diseases.

Today there is no one government entity whose sole purpose is to mount a full campaign against Alzheimer's disease which, without the discovery and development of effective treatments, is poised to strike 10 million baby boomers over the coming years. Building on the recommendations offered by the Alzheimer's Study Group (ASG), an independent, bipartisan panel created to evaluate the government's current efforts to combat the disease, this legislation creates a National Alzheimer's Project Office at the Department of Health and Human Services and an inter-agency Advisory Council that is responsible for creating a national plan to confront the escalating crisis. Drawing on the expertise residing in various government agencies as well as individuals living with the disease, caregivers, providers and other stakeholders, this office would provide strategic planning and coordination for the fight against Alzheimer's across the federal government as a whole.

In addition to the devastating impact on families, Alzheimer's also threatens the nation's health care system because of its significant costs. According to the Alzheimer's Association's 2010 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures report, there are nearly 11 million Alzheimer and dementia caregivers nationwide providing 12.5 billion hours of unpaid care valued at a staggering \$144 billion. This national figure includes 196,105 Alzheimer and dementia caregivers right here in Minnesota who provide a caregiver contribution of \$2,568,233,134.

On behalf of the millions of people living with Alzheimer's and the millions more at risk of developing this terminal disease in the future, the Alzheimer's Association is grateful for the leadership of Representative McCollum for supporting this meaningful legislation which, if enacted, would significantly improve the nation's ability to overcome the rapidly mounting Alzheimer crisis.

About the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota

The Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's. For more information, visit www.alz.org/mnnd.

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